

GERMANY AND ISRAEL APPOINT AMBASSADORS

ROLF PAULS

Rolf Friedemann Pauls was born in the Turingian town of Eckartsberg in August, 1915. His father was a Protestant clergyman. Between 1925 and 1934, Pauls was a pupil at the ancient Naumburg Cathedral school. For his last two years there he was chairman of the school's literary society, and



among his favourite authors were Gerhard Hauptmann, Thomas Mann and Stefan Zweig.

His father's attitude towards Hitler and the rise of Nazism required no "correction" after the war. He was active in the Wittenburg circle, an organisation opposed to the pro-Nazi German Christian movement. Pauls junior refused to join the Hitler youth on the pretext that he was busy with his school-leaving examinations.

In 1934, Pauls "opted out" of German society by joining the Reichswehr, though his real ambition was to become a historian. During the war he was injured and lost his left arm. In July 1945, he returned to civilian life on being released from an American P.O.W. camp. In 1948, he entered the civil service and set out once more on a peace time career. He studied law in Hamburg and gained his doctorate two years later.

Between 1949 and 1951, Pauls was liaison officer between the Chancellor's

office and the Allied High Commission. He began his diplomatic career in Luxembourg in 1952. He went to Washington in 1956 where he was counsellor and then head of the German embassy's political section. In 1963, he was in Athens where he served as the Ambassador's assistant.

For three years, from June 1952 to the end of 1955, Pauls worked closely with Professor Hallstein, West German Foreign Minister and co-author of the Hallstein Doctrine. After 1963 he was deputy director of the Foreign Ministry's aid and development department, an experience which should stand him in good stead when dealing with the economic relations between Federal Germany and the State of Israel.

ASHER BENATAN

From the beginning, Asher Benatan was the only real candidate as Israel's first ambassador to Bonn. "Arthur" (as he has been known for many years) is an unusual combination of mildness and determination, diplomacy and decision. He was born in Vienna, and at the age of nine joined the Zionist Youth Movement of Maccabi Hatzair. With the *Anschluss* in 1938 he illegally reached the shores of Mandatory Palestine and established with his Viennese friends the Kibbutz of Dovrat.

Mobilised by the Hagana in 1944, he worked in the depot that interrogated the immigrants from Eastern Europe, in order to supply the necessary information for the Jewish parachutists to be dropped behind enemy lines. In August, 1945, he joined the organisation responsible for the transfer of the remnants of European Jewry to Palestine, leaving the country under the nose of the Royal Navy in a 70-ton fishing boat. He reached his native Vienna where he headed a semi-official half-British, half-American organisation, whose members wore the initials CAJR on their uniforms, which stood for "Committee of Assistance for Jewish Refugees."

Quick and determined, he succeeded in persuading the French and American authorities in Austria to clear the way for his transports. This was

mainly achieved by means of his journalist's card bearing the name Arthur Pear, and since then he has been widely known to this very day as "Arthur."

In 1947, Benatan came back to his Kibbutz. With the establishment of the State in 1948 he was sent to Europe on behalf of the Foreign Ministry. From 1951 to 1953 he studied in



Geneva at the Institute for International Studies. Back in Israel he was appointed Director of the Inkoda Company, operating in Ethiopia.

In July, 1956, Shimon Peres chose Benatan to replace Joseph Nahmias (later Inspector-General of Police and now Ambassador in Rio) as Head of the Defence Ministry's Purchasing Mission in Paris. But in view of subsequent events, Benatan took over his new post only in January, 1957, and in the meantime acted as main liaison officer between Paris and Jerusalem during the crucial second half of 1956.

In Paris, between 1957 and 1959, Benatan was responsible for Ministry of Defence activities in Western Europe which brought him into constant touch with Western Germany.

The life of Israel's ambassador to Germany has been a chain of acts of courage and proof of international diplomatic skill. Israel could hardly find a more suitable man for this most delicate of its diplomatic posts.

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